Applying Student Development Principles to Your Assessment Plan

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Successful Assessment....

Creates Action

To....
Continue Effective Practice or Initiating Change (improvement)

Student Affairs:
The Art and Science of Arranging Furniture in a Circle

(NOT!)
Do Students Learn While In College?

INPUTS

OUTCOMES

Value Added
I – E – O Model

INPUTS

ENVIROMENTS

OUTCOMES

Alexander Astin

What Could Student Development Theory Add to Assessment Efforts?

in loco parentis
• on behalf of parents
• Character development
• Strict rules & discipline

Student Development
• Learn in and out of class
• Internal and external influences
• Student personal responsibility

Student Services
• Challenge
• Support
• Growth model
Intellectual Development

William Perry  Baxter Magolda
• Dualism  • Absolute knowing
• Multiplicity  • Transitional knowing
• Relativism  • Independent knowing
• Commitment in Relativism  • Contextual knowing

Student Development Theories See Students as Dynamic and Evolving.

Is this a model reflecting Student Development Theory?

INPUTS  ENVIRONMENTS  OUTCOMES

Alexander Astin
We all need help with some choices

Poor decisions:
- No experience
- No feedback
- Delayed feedback
- Past ≠ future
- Inertia
Make it easy to find the right path.

Choice Architects

SWITCH

How to change things when change is hard

Heath & Heath, 2010

Decision Paralysis

• Gourmet food store – in a jam
  – 6 samples
  – 24 samples
  – (6 samples, 10 times more likely to buy)

Heath & Heath, 2010
Switch – Bright Spots

- Improving nutrition in rural Vietnam
  - Poor water quality
  - Poor sanitation
  - Inadequate food supply

- Improving freshman computing skills
  - Pre/post test of computing skills
  - Gains not explained by “C” courses
  - Bright spots – residence hall students

Power of Peers

- “the student’s peer group is the single most important source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years.”


Earning the Good Will and Trust of Students

Students are busy people – respect their time
Students have real lives – be flexible
Peg on situations they already know
Pizza works
Feedback is critical – show that their participation mattered
Academic Momentum
The Toolbox Revised, Adleman

Credits in First Year
“Less than 20 credits by the end of the first calendar year is a serious drag on degree completion.”

Continuous Enrollment
“.continuous enrollment increases the probability of degree completion by 43%.”

Withdraw without penalty
Withdrawal from 1 of 5 courses attempted...
“cuts the probability of completing the degree in half”

End of First-year Grade Point Average GPA above 2.25 and upward trend

Return or Purposeful Transfer Transferring is not necessarily bad.

Source: Adelman, The Toolbox Revisited, 2006
Randy’s Opinion

Student Affairs has not contributed enough to assessment practice

Human Development – plateaus & cliffs
Human Motivation Theories
Peer to Peer Influences

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